

In Commemoration of Seventy-five Years in America



*"The Lord hath done great things
for us; whereof we are glad."*
PSALM 126:3

1876 - 1951

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Whitewater, Kansas

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**The First Church Building
erected in 1878**

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Testimonials

"We wish to express our sincere thanks to the Emmaus Church for their kind invitation to be present at this celebration. Circumstances do not permit us to be present. We wish to leave with you a verse which should express the feeling of the church at this occasion and henceforth. We find this verse in Psalm 126:3, where we read, 'The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.'"

Bro. J. C. and Sis. Kaufman,
Freeman, South Dakota

"I was glad to receive your invitation. But I am hardly in a shape to come. We realize that the Lord's hand has been wonderfully with our forefathers to lead them the way they have come. It is our duty of love to honor those who have led the way."

Bro. Henry Thiessen
Independence, Kansas

Foreword

"Whereas we are grateful to God for bringing our forefathers to America seventy-five years ago, and since we are thankful to our government for religious freedom, be it resolved, that a special day of thanksgiving be set apart sometime during 1951; that a committee of five members be elected to make a program, invite such people who would be interested in observing this day with us and make necessary other arrangements to fittingly observe the day."

The annual business meeting of the Emmaus Mennonite Church adopted the above resolution on December 29, 1950.

Since it was on the 100th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence of these United States (July 4, 1876) that the first of the Prussian Mennonites to settle in our community were coming into the Midwest, it was recommended by the anniversary committee, and adopted by the congregation, that July 8, 1951, be set aside in gratefulness to God for our first seventy-five years in America.

It has been said that the pioneers brought the sacrifices, that their children enjoyed them, and that their grandchildren are letting them slip by. God forbid that we and our children should regard lightly the faith, the convictions, and the courage of those who left established homes in search of new homes in a land in which they might enjoy freedom to worship according to the dictates of their conscience.

As authorized by the 1951 annual business meeting, we present herewith a booklet, "In Commemoration of Seventy-five Years in America," with the hope and prayer that our young people in coming years, if the Lord tarries, may truly realize the cost and value of this precious heritage.

The Anniversary Committee, Herman A. Wiebe, Chairman; Walter H. Dyck, Secretary; Ed Claassen; G. A. Harder; and Mrs. John Kopper.



Anniversary Service

Descendants of Prussian Mennonite pioneers who migrated to Kansas and Nebraska in 1876 gathered in large numbers on Sunday, July 8, 1951, at the Emmaus Mennonite Church, northeast of Whitewater, to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the migration.

In spite of the hot sun and high humidity, with afternoon temperatures in the nineties, the church was well filled for the three services of the day. It was a day of praise and thanksgiving in song and spoken messages, recalling the dedication to principle, the faith and courage which led the fathers to leave Prussia and settle in a new land.

The observance opened with the 75th anniversary praise service. Brother H. Albert Claassen, Beatrice, Nebraska, brought the opening message based on Gen. 12:1; Isa. 30:21; and John 12:36. Brother Walter H. Dyck, pastor of Emmaus Church, spoke on Deut. 6:20-21. A number of old hymns, both German and English, were sung. A choir composed of "children of the pioneers" sang, "Grosser Gott, Wir Loben Dich."

Brother Ed Claassen presided at the afternoon program. Brother Arnold Funk, pastor of the Brudertal Church, Hillsboro, made the devotional opening. Three carefully prepared papers were presented at this service. B. G. Harder

dealt with "Life in the Old Country and Reasons for Emigration to America;" E. G. Claassen related "Trip Experiences and the Pioneer Years;" and Herman A. Wiebe read "A Brief History of the Emmaus Church." Phebe Ann Epp presented a poem written by her mother, Mrs. John Epp, Jr., entitled, "These Seventy-five Years." The pastor led in a testimony period. Among those speaking briefly were Brother B. W. Harder, former minister and elder of the church; Mrs. Henry Epp, representing those of the same migration movement who settled at Beatrice, Nebraska; John L. Regier, speaking for those of the Zion Church, Elbing; Mrs. P. W. Penner of the Brudertal Church, Hillsboro; and Brother and Sister J. D. Dozy, of Amsterdam, Holland, who brought greetings from Mennonites there. The choir, made up largely of "grandchildren of the pioneers," sang, "We Praise Thee, O God, Our Redeemer."

At the evening program, Brother C. J. Claassen presided. Brother J. E. Entz, representing First Mennonite Church, Newton, made the introduction. A Zion Church men's quartet sang, "The Blessed Giver." Brother H. J. Dyck, pastor of Zion Church, Elbing, gave "A Look Into the Future." The Emmaus Church choir sang, "O God, Beneath Thy Guiding Hand." Dr. Cornelius Krahn gave an illustrated message, tracing Mennonite migrations during the past centuries. The pastor summarized the impressions of the day under the following seven points:

- (1) A deep feeling of gratefulness to the God of our fathers;
- (2) a bond of fellowship with sister congregations;
- (3) an obligation that we should better acquaint our youth with the faith and sacrifices of our forefathers;
- (4) a prominence of reference to material and spiritual blessings gained;
- (5) a reference to nonresistance as the outstanding distinguishing characteristic of our people;
- (6) an increasing tendency toward losing the simple life and love as a way of life; and
- (7) a need for a continued sacrifice of life and possessions

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as a positive witness in the areas of missions and voluntary service.

A quite extensive display of family heirlooms, including Bibles, books, and pictures, was displayed in the basement. During the intermission between the afternoon and evening meetings the women of the church served a lunch of sandwiches, coffee cake, applesauce, and iced tea.

"The Lord Brought Us Out With a Mighty Hand"

(A resumé of the Anniversary Message given by the pastor, Walter H. Dyck, at the morning worship service, July 8, 1951, 10:30 a.m.)

We are grateful to the Lord for the privilege of this service of thanksgiving to God for the untold blessings experienced by the forefathers, their children, and grandchildren. Since the children of the pioneers are liable to forget and the grandchildren are liable never to know, we feel it our sacred duty to urge upon everyone, especially the young people, to give the closest attention.

"What Mean Ye?"

Our text for this hour is found in Deut. 6:20-21: "And when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord our God hath commanded you? (or as it is rendered in Exodus 12:26, "When your children shall say to you, What mean ye by this service?) Then thou shalt say unto thy son, we were **Pharaoh's bondmen** in Egypt; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand."

Compromises Rejected

For several hundred years the Israelites had been in a new country. When a king arose "who knew not Joseph" the promises given them were gradually withdrawn. Various compromises were proposed by the Pharaoh of the land. They were tempted to accept the offer permitting them to go only a short

way into the wilderness toward the promised land. It was suggested that they should leave the children. But it was they upon whom the future depended. At another time they were asked to leave their possessions in the land of bondage. But by the mighty hand of God they had been brought out. The people of God of the days of Exodus and their children's children owed everything to the "mighty hand" of God.

Hence, a graphic service of gratefulness was instituted. It was called the Passover, so that annually, the children of each succeeding generation might have enacted before them this great act of God's deliverance.

Freedom from Sin

Will you note with me, first of all, that this is a picture of all men everywhere sold under the bondage of sin and Satan. Only when Christ makes men free are they free indeed. Only when their eyes turn to a new and better land—a land of better promises, a real freedom—and only as they actually renounce allegiance to the Egypt of bondage and permit the "mighty hand of God" to carry them forth, do they become free. Oh, the shackles of slavery under which much of humanity suffers today—sold under the sins of self-pride, self-sufficiency, self-righteousness—unwilling that here and now God's mighty hand might bring them out into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

Freedom to Worship

The second application is one that comes to us and to our children in a most forceful way today.

Our forefathers, too, spent years in a land that promised liberty to worship God according to the dictates of conscience. This afternoon and evening we will hear many gripping incidents in the lives of men and women who went from Holland to Germany. And then, after many had gone to Russia, the ministers of the Church at Heubuden with others joined in what became

known as the "Auswanderungs Gemeinde." The question as to whether one was really true to the Lord unless he believed and lived out the "full gospel" of our Lord, was a burning issue. To illustrate, we are told that a young man who had served in the Emperor's armies, came to partake of Communion, but was passed by, by the elder of the Church. The young man brought suit against the elder who was fined 75 marks by the government for his stand.

Lest We Forget

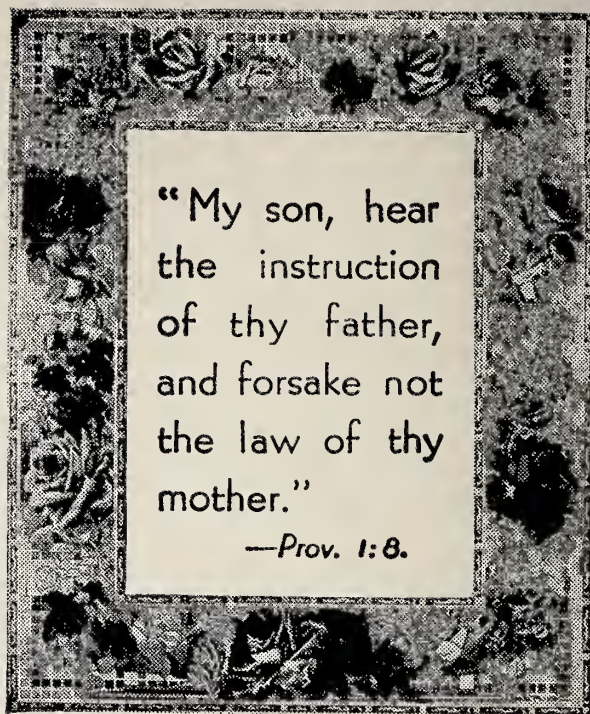
After seventy-five years we are again being faced with the temptation of leaving this "whole gospel for the whole man," to forget the gracious providences of the God of our fathers, the generous provisions of our government, and the sacrifices of these pioneers.

"When your children shall say to you, what mean ye by this service? Then thou shalt say unto thy son, we werebondmen..... and the Lord brought us out.... with A MIGHTY HAND."

Testimonials

"Though we have lived in other places much longer than in the community where we grew up, nevertheless we still consider Emmaus as our home church. Our memory takes us back to the time when we attended "Uncle" Leonhard Suderman's instruction classes, where our childhood mind received impressions that decades that have followed have not been able to wipe out. This was in the first church building where we also later received our catechetical instruction and were baptized by "Uncle" Gustav Harder, whose memory we cherish. It was he also who joined us in marriage and ordained us to the missionary work among the Indians.

"Many changes have taken place in the past 75 years. Many of these changes indicate a progress in the right direction. We would like to mention only the interest in missions. Missionary



offerings are liberal, young people have gone out to the different continents to bring the gospel to others, and, we feel sure, many are supporting the work with earnest prayers. Other young people are active in the home church and in surrounding communities.

"These facts are very gratifying and encouraging. And we believe that the Lord has blessed us materially and spiritually, because our parents were willing to leave home, friends, and country in order to remain true to their convictions in obedience to God's commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." This is a precious heritage from our forefathers. However, may we not make the mistake of taking matters for granted that they will remain this way without effort on our part.

"Some lines that Dr. C. H. Wedel often quoted, come to my mind: 'Was du ererbt von deinen Vaetern, erwirb es um es zu besitzen.' What you have inherited of your fathers, acquire it in order to possess it. Our fathers brought a great sacrifice in order to remain true to their faith. How much are our convictions worth to us? Are we ready to be true to them at any cost? May the Lord grant it.

Sincerely, yours in His service,
Agnes and Alfred Wiebe



“Life in the Old Country and Reasons for Emigration to America.”

by B. G. Harder

A Unique Stand

In the history of our church, written by our first elder, Leonard Suderman, we find the following words, “Within the church of Christ there was always a group that took a unique stand toward peace and nonresistance. This group has always remained small, because this principle did not find general approval for it led its followers into a life of self-denial. This group felt constrained to practice the great principle of love, also in their church life, to avoid all thought of revenge, and for this reason also to abstain from all direct and indirect warfare.

True to Faith

“Because of this principle of love and non-resistance, the Mennonite church has always endured fierce persecution, torture and death. History reports how in times of persecution they took refuge in the hills and valleys, caves and canyons of Austria, Italy, Switzerland and southern France.

“But in spite of terrible persecutions and mistreatment, they remained true to their faith, knowing that in the end the victory would be theirs and their Christ’s.”

Invited to Poland

As a result of similar persecutions in Holland during the middle of the 16th century, Mennonites came in large numbers by permission of the Polish

king, and upon invitation of owners of waste and swamp lands along the lowlands of the Vistula and Nogat rivers, to serve in the vicinity of Danzig and Elbing, in what was then known as Poland.

The Dutch Mennonites were experts in the art of reclaiming swamp lands by means of dikes and canals, and so because of their economic worth they were given a hearty welcome.

The Mennonites saw in their daily work the practice of a religious duty and felt themselves responsible to God for their property. Through their agricultural ability and industry, large swampy estates in the Vistula delta were converted into the most productive fields of all Poland. These estates were leased to the Mennonites by successive owners for 30 to 40 year periods until finally they came into complete possession of them.

Visited by Menno

It was here that in 1560 the first congregation of non-resistant Christians was formed in western Germany, where it was frequently visited and served by Menno Simons himself.

At first, living in isolated groups, they were able to live a quiet and unmolested life. But in time, as they grew in numbers and became wealthy, native citizens became jealous of the prosperity of these thrifty and sober farmers who also practiced an unpopular religion.

Restricted Freedom

They were no longer burned at the stake, to be sure, but they were frequently hampered in the free exercise of their faith and for a long time were not granted the rights of citizenship.

Not all Mennonites were farmers. Many of the refugees settled within the cities of Danzig and Elbing. When in 1656 the suburbs of Danzig were burned down for defense purposes, many Mennonites lost their property. Many times they were also hampered in their business and did not enjoy the

economic freedom as those in the rural areas did.

During this period a ruling was made that the Mennonites, "shall keep themselves quiet in their religion and shall not try to induce and draw anyone into their fold." Therefore the growth of the churches depended entirely on increase by birth.

Economically, the Mennonites were hampered in many ways. Over long periods of time they were not permitted to buy land from a Lutheran or Catholic without special permission from the ruler. For over 150 years they were forced by the dominating church to pay heavy taxes and to support the Catholic and Lutheran parishes of their day.

First Church Built

For a long time they were not permitted to build a house of worship but gathered in homes. Upon repeated requests to the authorities, the ruler finally agreed if they could build a church within a week, they would be permitted to do so. The ruler thought this impossible, but these Dutch farmers found a way. They hauled all the building materials to a neighboring farmstead. Here they sawed and fitted the lumber; and when the appointed time came, they hauled it to the building site and in a week the church building was finished, ready for worship. Thus, the first Mennonite church building was erected in Prussia.

Later they also had to pay very high prices for a permit to build a church and when the congregations of Heubuden, Ladekopp and Tiegenhagen got their permit to build churches in 1768, they also had to build one for the Catholic church and maintain it.

Look for New Home

Forbidden to buy land from a non-Mennonite, hampered by excessive taxes, and unable to provide homes and existence for the growing number of young people, the Mennonites looked about them for a new home where



they might be free to exercise their religious convictions without fear of governmental restraint.

Just at this time Russia gave them an invitation to settle in the Ukraine. From 1769 to 1804 over 500 families migrated to Russia. At this time the king stated in a document that emigration of Mennonites should be stopped since there was too great a loss in population, culture and wealth.

The Mennonites of Prussia were of Dutch cultural background and the Dutch language was used exclusively in their worship services.

When in 1762 the first German sermon was preached in Danzig, it gave rise to much criticism. Five years later it was tried again with better results. It was not, however, until 1780, 220 years after the founding of the Mennonite church in Germany, that the German songbook was introduced in their services.

New Threats

The freedom to live according to the dictates of their conscience was constantly being threatened by their rulers. In 1744 the Mennonites were granted full rights of citizenship. The recruiting agents, however, were instructed "that they respect the convictions of the Mennonite subjects in the Elbing district in the matter of taking part in war." When in 1746 General Gessler tried to draw Mennonites into the army, the church sent a petition to the king saying, "such severe order never occurred to our fathers and we cannot obey, as we have sacrificed our lives to live and die for Jesus,

and having renounced revenge we want to remain in His Majesty's protection as disarmed and nonresistant Christians."

Twenty-seven years later they were ordered to pay the sum of \$5,000 for their exemption. This was not a substitute for military service but a legal payment in lieu of the same. This order was accepted by the Prussian Mennonites in the Heubuden church and was paid annually for over 100 years but for the last 50 years it was more than doubled.

Grateful for Exemption

In gratitude for the exemptions granted, and to show their loyalty to their country, they frequently made special contributions in times of special need. At one time they donated \$6,000 and 6,000 yards of linen. During wars they sent food into the hospitals and collected large sums of money for the wounded, thus being true to their principle that they wanted to heal wounds rather than inflict them. In 1806 while the Prussian King and Queen were going through Prussia on their way to the frontier, the Mennonite churches of that region collected \$30,000 as a gift for the war widows and orphans, and had delegated a farmer and his wife, by the name of Nickel, to present the gift to the King and Queen. In addition, the wife gave the queen a basket of fresh butter, remarking that she had heard the queen was in need of such a luxury. Both gifts were greatly appreciated by the royal pair.

Freedom Promised

Finally in 1780, they were granted the so-called "Gnaden Privilegium" in which the King guaranteed for himself and his successors on the Prussian throne:

1. Everlasting freedom from conscription and the consequent military service.
2. Undisturbed freedom of religion.

3. Protection in practicing their customary trades and professions in the limits of the laws and regulations introduced hitherto in Prussia.

During the war of 1813 universal military service was inaugurated. At first Mennonites were not exempted. The elders appealing to the king for their former status, declared they would rather pay the extraordinary taxes and, what was even worse, "bear the mockery and ill-will of their neighbors," than to take up arms contrary to their religious convictions. As a result of this appeal they were exempted upon the payment of special taxes.

Growing Militarization

The greatest problem confronting the Mennonites of northern Germany during the 19th century was the problem of maintaining their doctrine and practice of non-participation in war. This growing spirit of militarism made it increasingly difficult for those of the non-resistant faith to live up to this conviction.

While many efforts were made to keep the state privilege of exemption, many efforts were also made by sincere people to keep the principle of non-resistance alive among the Mennonites.

Although many of the Mennonites became prosperous, they tried to maintain simplicity and nonconformity as much as possible. More and more, however, broke away from the original restrictions of apparel and household. More and more also broke away from the position of non-resistance.

During the 19th century the military spirit throughout Prussia and all Germany ran high. In 1848 a Prussian constitution declared that everyone was subject to military service, a number of Mennonites fearing for their faith, left for other lands. Hundreds of families emigrated to Russia.

Under Conscription

In 1867 a national conscription law was passed abolishing all exemptions,

thus ending the privileges which Mennonites had enjoyed in Germany for over 300 years.

A year later this law was modified by the king of Prussia by a cabinet order making it possible to substitute non-combatant service in hospitals and quartermaster departments for full military service.

This led to a division among the brethren. A considerable number tiring in their struggle for military exemption were ready to follow the example of their brethren in Holland who had discarded the principle of non-resistance.

Too Late

Some of the elders, among them the brethren, Gerhard Penner and William Ewert, strongly opposed the position many of the churches took in favor of noncombatant service. They put forth much effort to revive the biblical principle of noresistance among the Mennonites. Their efforts, however, came too late. Since Mennonites were not allowed to maintain their own schools, the younger generation, which had been educated in the Lutheran elementary and high schools, where the militaristic spirit flourished, had not been prepared for such a test.

The government saw that the loyalty of Mennonite principles could not be harmonized with these noncombatant duties. So, in order to avoid all religious pressure, they were given two years time to emigrate. According to this all Mennonites who did not want to emigrate, would be subject to conscription.

New Decisions

The whole Mennonite community of 13,000 souls faced the inescapable decision either to go into noncombatant service or to leave their homes and country as many others had done before them. This decision was accompanied with many sacrifices. They had well-equipped farms and many servants to do their work. Every home had a cook, a housemaid, nursemaid and one



to do the gardening and milking, also a young boy to heat their large stoves and brick ovens with straw, called "Peserjunge."

The men had several servants the year round and in time of harvest, upwards to 50, to cut, bind and thresh the grain. In Europe the landowners were managers of their estates, while cheap labor did the actual work.

Consider America

They were advised by Christian Krehbiel, who already lived in America, that every ordinary farmer and every business man in ordinary circumstances must be his own best workman and that their system of hired labor would not work in America. In Prussia the wages were from \$50 to \$60 a year, while in America they were from \$150 to \$200, and harvest wages \$1.50 to \$2.00 per day. One could not depend on men to stay for any length of time, for everyone could start to farm on his own with very little money.

In Heubuden, the congregation from which most of our forefathers came, the Elder, all ministers and the smaller part of the congregation, disagreed with the cabinet order completely. The seriousness of the crisis is shown by the fact that they had no communion services in the Heubuden church from 1874 to 1876.

Critical Situation

How disturbed and critical the situation was, is shown by the letter Elder Johann Andreas circulated within his congregation, stating: "Hereby I announce publically that I, on the grounds of our confession of faith, cannot commemorate the Lord's supper with those who accept military conscription, but



only with those who want to remain loyal to their confession of faith.

Majority Stays

"This announcement is made that those who want to change their faith in accordance with the cabinet decree, commemorate the Lord's supper separately.

"Oh, how I wish that all the members of our congregation come and no one would stay away that we would be strengthened in our faith, to become perfect in love, and to receive in the future, with all faithful ones, the crown of life."—Signed, Johann Andreas.

When the greater part of the church members of Heubuden submitted to the demands of the government, those who could not accept these demands, withdrew from the church and founded what was known as the "Emigrating church" or the "Auswanderungs Gemeinde."

Minority Leaves

In 1876, 55 families and 29 single persons immigrated to the United States, founding the three new congregations at Newton, Beatrice and Whitewater. Some joined the Bruderthal group near Hillsboro.

In 1877 Elder Gerhard Penner emigrated to Beatrice, becoming the elder of the congregation there.

When we consider God's providence with our forefathers, who is there among us, who would not want to thank our heavenly Father for leading them to America the only country in which it is still possible to enjoy a full freedom of worship.

"Trip Experiences and the Pioneer Years "

by Ernest G. Claassen

In former years we have held services to commemorate the coming of our ancestors to this neighborhood. Previously, those who came over 75 years ago had a part in the program. Today only two of these are living: G. H. Regier, Sr., of Whitewater and Mrs. John Entz of McAllen, Texas. Both are so feeble that they cannot share in this program.

Emigration Begins

Our forefathers were not the first Mennonites to come to Kansas. A large number, coming from Russia had settled in Marion and McPherson counties two years before, in the so-called grasshopper year of 1874. Of these settlers it has been said: "The Mennonites and the grasshoppers came the same year, but the Mennonites stayed longer." Many in Germany turned their eyes westward. A young man, Aaron Claassen, had traveled in America and worked on farms here and returned to Germany to bring his family over. A number of others had by this time decided to emigrate and preparations were begun. Aaron Claassen, with his experience in travel, and knowledge of the English language, was very helpful to the others on the whole journey. A contract was made with the North German Lloyd Steamship Co., to travel across the ocean in the ship "Rhein". The entire 2nd class cabin section and part of the steerage were reserved. Farms were sold, many chests and trunks were packed, as John Harder, Sr. once wrote, "with necessities and with some things that were not necessary."

Leave Simonsdorf

June 15, 1876, was set as the date of departure, and early that morning more than a hundred emigrants assembled at the railroad station of

Simonsdorf to board the special train which was to carry them to the seaport of Bremen. At 8:15 a.m. the train moved out of the station, carrying these travelers away from the homes which most of them were never to see again. They rode all day through the countryside of North Germany, reaching Berlin about 8 o'clock in the evening. The service had left much to be desired. There had been no light in the coaches, so some of the emigrants spoke to the railroad officials about this. They found the officials rather "kratzburstig". It is not easy to find an English expression for this, but it does not mean pleasant and agreeable. However, their request had some effect and they had somewhat better service from then on. They traveled all night and reached Bremen early the next morning. Here, by pre-arranged plan, they were met by the managers of several Bremen hotels, who took charge of their baggage, and tried in every way to make their short stay a pleasant one. The various heads of families spent the forenoon at the office of the steamship company, giving the necessary information as to number in family, age of each one, etc., to enable the officials to determine the amounts due from each one. They were asked to return in the afternoon to make their payments and to receive their tickets. The evening was spent in Bremen's beautiful park, a tour conducted by the hotel managers.

Embark at Bremen

The next morning there was some last-minute shopping. At 9 a.m. they boarded a train that took them to the shore, then a small steamer which carried them to the ocean steamer, "Rhein." Many and varied were the impressions and feelings of these travelers in such unfamiliar surroundings and in the strain of parting. We can imagine that the young people may have enjoyed the adventure. The older ones felt the seriousness of leaving the only home they had ever known to venture into a strange and distant country. The

small children, of course, did not understand all that was taking place, and some seem to have viewed the proceedings with distrust; at least, one 6 year old girl screamed with terror at the idea of going out on that vast expanse of water. But regardless of the emotions stirred up by the situation, the time of parting came. The friends that had accompanied them from Prussia loaded, and shortly before 4 p.m., on June 17, the ship moved out of Bremen harbor into the North Sea.

Families Represented

Some of those who were now setting their faces westward were the families of Bernhard Harder, grandfather of B. W. and G. A. Harder; Dietrich Claassen, grandfather of Ed Claassen; Gerhard Regier, father of G. H. Regier, Sr.; Henry Penner, grandfather of Mrs. John E. Regier; Peter Dyck, the great grandfather of Walter H. Dyck; and Abraham Claassen, my grandfather. Besides these more mature people, there was a young unmarried man, John Dyck, father of Gerhard Dyck; also four newly married couples. These were Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Regier, parents of John L. Regier; Mr. and Mrs. Bernhard Regier, parents of B. P. Regier; Mr. and Mrs. Edward Claassen, parents of Ed. Claassen; and Mr. and Mrs. John Harder, Sr., parents of B. W. and G. A. Harder. The last named, John Harder, Sr., in writing for our commemoration service 25 years ago said young people now might envy them making an ocean voyage as a wedding trip, and that it **would** have been very pleasant, if—it had not been for seasickness.

The passengers, at their first supper on board ship found the food very good, and partook of it heartily, so that the stewards were kept busy serving them. One steward remarked to another, "Tomorrow it will be easier. There won't be so many." And so it turned out. That night a wind arose, the sea became rough and John Harder records that many were missing at the breakfast table and that he was one of them.

Peter Dyck

Minister

1876-1883



Worship at Sea

Since the first full day on the sea was Sunday, the captain was asked for permission to hold religious services in the ship's dining room. He not only gave permission but also instructed the stewards to see that all was quiet so the services would not be disturbed. Peter Dyck, as the only minister on board, led in this service, and one on the next Sunday, as well as the daily services held each evening.

Early the next morning the ship reached Southampton, England. Here the passengers welcomed the opportunity to stand on solid ground again and to see something of England. These experienced farmers took note of the quality of the live stock, mentioning with approval, in their diaries, the horses, cows and sheep they had seen.

After a day and a half in Southampton the ship resumed its journey moving along the white chalk cliffs of Southern England, till these finally faded away in the distance and they were out in the ocean. The ship was an example of the change from the old to the new. Although driven by steam, it was also equipped with sails which were hoisted whenever the wind was favorable.

On the High Seas

The weather was sometimes stormy, sometimes fair. Some were little troubled by seasickness; some, when the sea was rough; and some, almost constantly. Bernhard Harder suffered most, so that the ship's doctor said he had never seen such a severe case.

He spent most of the days lying weak and helpless on the deck. But even this did not entirely dampen his good humor. He once said jokingly to my grandfather, "Eck kun mi aever Di argere. Du steihst wie en Fuerst, un eck mot ligge wie en Bettler." ("I could be provoked at you. You stand like a prince and I must lie here like a beggar.")

The young people did not let the rough weather or the uncertain future depress them unduly. My grandfather spent some of his time keeping up his diary and writing letters. He records that at one time the young people were so lively around him that it was difficult for him to write, and that another time they accidentally upset his ink bottle.

Happy Landing

On July 1, after 11 days on the ocean, they landed in America. There were the usual inspections and the unloading of the baggage began. The workers used iron hooks, much like our hay hooks to handle the heavy chests. When they hooked into the bedding the feather beds began to spill their contents. Protest was made but one worker said lightly, "Lass die Federn nur fliegen." ("Let the feathers fly.")

Everything moved rather too fast for the immigrants, anyway. Before the baggage was unloaded they were told it was time to board the trains that were to take them west. Seven families took a train directly for Kansas, where they had friends to receive them in Halstead. The others went to Iowa, to stay till they could decide where to settle.

The American Way

Two days were spent on the train, and the one party arrived in Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, the evening of July 3, in a pouring thunderstorm. The next morning they had their first opportunity to mingle freely with the American people and to observe their way

of life. It was the 4th of July, 1876, the 100th anniversary of American independence, and the American way of life seemed to be a very noisy, lively thing, indeed. The other party of travelers had reached St. Louis, and they too thought that life in America seemed to be a very festive affair.

Kansas or Nebraska?

Originally all these immigrants planned to settle in one place. As settlement possibilities, only eastern Kansas and Nebraska were considered. It was felt that farther north, it was too cold; farther south, too hot; farther west, too dry. After viewing Nebraska, and Kansas, from Pawnee Rock to Council Grove, six of the families in Halstead bought land in Butler County . . . buying six sections at six dollars per acre. Those in Mt. Pleasant all went to Nebraska, with the exception of Peter Dyck and Abraham Claassen, who joined their friends in Kansas.

First Farms Bought

It might be of interest to recall on what farms some of these families located. Gerhard Regier settled on the land just northeast of the church, where his grandson, Willie Regier, now lives. Bernhard Harder's original farm is now occupied by his granddaughter, Mrs. John Epp, and her family. Peter Dyck bought the farm north of Elbing, now owned by his great-grandson, John P. Janzen. He paid \$3,000 for the half section. Abraham Claassen wanted land with water and timber on it, and to obtain this, settled several miles east of the others. He built a stone house, part of which is still standing and is now occupied by his great-grandson, Louis Claassen.

New Buildings

Building up these farms, most of which had no buildings at all, was a tremendous task, made more so by the fact that the nearest railroad stations were Newton and Peabody. There

was a small village three miles east of the church, called Plum Grove. Here was a general store, and a blacksmith shop. Later the railroad reached El Dorado and some trading was done there. All hauling, of course, was done by horse and wagon. There were no improved roads, not even graded roads, and no bridges, except near the towns. It was during these early times that a great sorrow came to the Peter Dyck family. Two sons of the family, young men in their twenties, returning from El Dorado found the Whitewater river rather high at the ford about a mile southeast of the present Plum Grove schoolhouse. They attempted to cross but were both drowned.

Breaking the Sod

Breaking the prairie sod was a difficult task. One of those who had a part in it said their plowshares had to be filed every round and hammered out every half day. Rev. Gustav Harder later told how they would dispose of the rattlesnakes. Whenever the plowman saw one, he would take a chain trace from his mule team, kill the snake with it, replace the trace, and go on plowing.

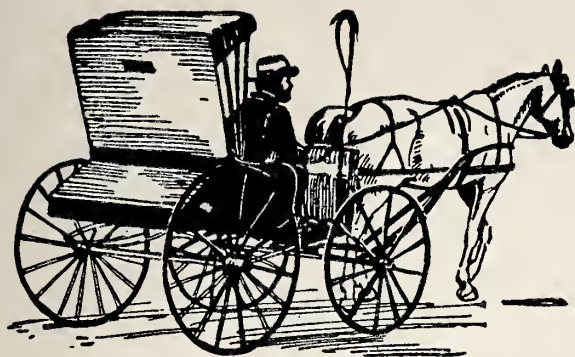
New Towns

In time, things became somewhat easier. After eight years, in 1884, the Missouri Pacific railroad was built, the Rock Island, later. The towns that sprang up along the railroads were far more convenient as shopping centers than Newton and Peabody. There was a question as to whether the Missouri Pacific station south of the church should be named Harder or Brainerd.

The late Jacob Regier was asked to suggest a name for the Rock Island station near his home. He mentioned the names of two German cities . . . Elbing and Marienburg. The railroad official said, Marienburg is too long. We'll call it Elbing."

An Evaluation

We have traced the course of these



pioneers across the ocean, and have recalled something of the first years here. We have seen them at their worship, at their work, and in their lighter moments. We see them, not as storybook saints who are not troubled by temptation. Not only were they flesh and blood, but they were our flesh and blood. Our failings were their failings, our virtues, such as they are, are the same as theirs. What then,

can we learn from them? What were the beliefs, the hopes, that shaped their lives?

With other Christians, they believed in God as Creator. They trusted in Jesus Christ as the Redeemer from sin. They felt that in following Him as their leader they should strive to show forth what He taught. Love to all men, constant forgiveness, returning good for evil, going the second mile with those who had no right to compel the first; these things should not be thought of only at certain times, or in terms of special privilege, but should be the basis for our daily and hourly walk. We must humbly admit that we fall short of this goal, nor did our fathers attain it. Still it is to this deeper insight, this worthier walk that we should today dedicate what time remains to us.

"These Seventy-five Years"

Mrs. John Epp, Jr.

God leads His people wondrously, on life's journey here below;

But it's in love and mercy as past history clearly shows.

"Get thee out of thy country, from thy kindred thou shalt part;"

This was the command to Abraham, and since, to many a human heart.

To our forefathers also, from God, came this command:

And He has led them safely, by His Almighty Hand.

They bade farewell to loved ones; their farms were left behind.

They crossed the big wide ocean a haven here to find.

God's blessing rested on them; a new home soon they found,

Where they could serve their Master and be tillers of the ground.

Where they could train their children as their conscience would dictate

And their sons need not bear arms, as in the older land of late.

Oh yes, things here were different, but little did they mind;

They all were sharing in the task. The servants stayed behind.

It was in 1876, just seventy-five years ago;

When our forefathers to Kansas came, as many of you may know.

A deputation of twelve men, came first, so we are told;

To see the land and then return, as Israel's spies of old.

And one of these, we'll not neglect, to make mention of it here,

Became the first Elder of Emmaus and served for many a year.

Russian and German Mennonites were sending these men forth

To travel here extensively and then bring their report;

And as a result of this, immigration had its start.

Some left their homeland joyfully, others with heavy heart.

There were many things for them to pack, before the ocean voyage
And yet they did it heartily and full of hope and courage.
Their thoughts went to an unknown land, where Indian tribes would roam,
And useful would be everything in starting a new home.
Oh, many of us don't realize what it meant for them, I fear,
To leave their parental inheritance and to become a pioneer.
It meant the breaking of friendship bonds, even families had to sever,
They disposed of many a treasured thing and said "good-bye" forever.

On the 4th of July in '76, so we find it to be right,
The first few families of our group in St. Louis spent the night.
They were surprised as there they heard, in what a noisy way
America observed the 100th anniversary of Independance Day.
They, however, didn't linger long. They found it to be best
To proceed as soon as possible and travel further west.
From Halstead, later, so we read, they to Butler County came;
By paying six dollars per acre soon had six sections to their claim.
These were not as we see it now, with good farms everywhere,
With roads and trees and fences and highways here and there.
The warm breeze was swaying the prairie thick and high
And overhead was stretching the azure summer sky.
The women stayed in Halstead, but the men were busy here
Hauling lumber and then building, before the winter of the year;
But first they cut the prairie. At the hay stacks slept at night.
With a menu of coffee, bread, and syrup, they got along all right.
Six families constituted the early settlement here
And more and more were added to these from year to year.
The first church service, that we have record of, we see
Was held in Greatgrandfather Harder's newly erected granary.
The first business meeting consisted of 17 brethren in all;
And the first church house was completed in '78, in fall.
Though small was the beginning, yet steadily it grew;
To nearly 400 members, where then we had but few.
One member of that little group is still with us today,
The others have gone to glory to their eternal stay.

Fifty years after the first, this, the third church was erected
And the Elder serving now is the sixth we have elected.
Today as we are looking back over seventy-five long years,—
We see days of rejoicing and we see days of tears.
Many happy couples walked this aisle by Mendelssohn's strain.
Silently the graves bear witness of untold tears and pain.
Although church life continued somewhat in the same routine,
Yet here and there some changes today are plainly seen.
Now the weight of the ministry rests on the shoulders of one;
Years ago we had three or four by whom this work was done.
Some things have become dear to us, that once were strange and new;
Such as having Sunday School and instruments, to mention only a few.
The rows of buggies and horses that were seen here so long
We saw them slowly vanish, until finally all were gone.

Once more I wish you'd bear with me as over seventy-five years we glance
 And notice how God graciously has led us to advance;
 Our members include doctors, missionaries, and deaconesses, too,
 We have relief and Christian workers, of these more than a few.
 Now as we come to celebrate our hearts are full of praise
 We marvel at God's greatness; we marvel at His ways.
 Our hearts are filled with gratitude for what our fathers wrought
 In leaving the old homeland, as a new home here they sought.
 God has wonderfully blest us, no one would now deny,
 Both spiritually and materially with blessings from on high.
 So let us then press forward as our forefathers have done,
 That for others we win a blessing as they for us have won.
 And asking God to choose the place that each one is to fill
 Having only one desire, to be in the center of His will.

"A Brief History of Emmaus Church"

by Herman A. Wiebe



Leonhard Suderman

Elder

1876-1900



Abraham Suderman

Minister

1876-1883

The families of our church which began the Prussian Mennonite settlement of this vicinity in 1876 and founded our congregation were the following: Abraham Claassen, Dietrich Claassen, Eduard Claassen, Johann Dyck, John Harder, Bernhard Harder, Heinrich Penner, and Gerhard Regier. These were joined in the following year by Abraham and Leonhard Suderman families. Several families in and near Newton, as well as others in Fairmount Township, at first regarded themselves as part of our church fellowship, but later preferred to organize into separate congregations.

With the founding of our church Brother Leonhard Suderman served as elder and Abraham Suderman and Peter Dyck as ministers. However, when Abraham Suderman moved to Newton (the First Mennonite Church of Newton was organized in 1883), Elder Leonhard Suderman requested that an election of new ministers be held. This election, held on January 14, 1884, resulted in the selection of Eduard Claassen and Gustav Harder who were ordained as ministers two weeks later. Brother Leonhard Suderman also continued serving the First Church at Newton as elder until 1886.



Gustav Harder

Minister
1884-1923

Elder
1902-1923

On April 3, 1893, Brother Johann P. Andres was elected as minister and ordained on May 7.

Our Elder Leonhard Suderman passed away quite unexpectedly on January 26, 1900. Brother Eduard Claassen was elected as his successor on March 30, and ordained by Elder Christian Krehbiel, Halstead, on September 30, of the same year.

On February 14, 1902, Brother Claassen withdrew from services as elder and minister of the church. Thereupon, on April 20, 1902, Brother Gustav Harder was elected as elder and ordained on May 25 by Elder Christian Krehbiel.

The brethren Heinrich M. Wiebe and Bernhard W. Harder were elected as ministers on July 20, 1902, and assumed their duties on August 31.

Women's Sewing Society

The work of the Womens Sewing Society had already begun as early as 1895. Mrs. Marie Esau, Mrs. J. L. Regier, Mrs. H. H. Wiebe, and others led in this work.

Sunday School

With the founding of the Emmaus Church a catechism class for young



Eduard Claassen

Minister
1884-1902

Elder
1900-1902

people was introduced and taught on Sunday afternoons by Elder Suderman. In 1904 a Sunday School was organized with classes being held before the Sunday morning services, and the elder continuing the instruction class for candidates for baptism.

Brother B. W. Harder served as the first Sunday School superintendent. Others succeeding him during these years were John Harder, Sr., Heinrich Schmitt, Christian Thierstein, Herman Wiebe, Bernhard Wiebe, John Harder, Jr., Eduard Esau, Franz Busenitz, Ed Claassen, Carl Claassen, Hans Regier, H. J. Wiebe, Frank Busenitz, B. G. Harder, Gus H. Regier, Jr., Ed Entz and Edgar Busenitz.

Church Schools

A week-day parochial school was provided in the early years, offering primarily Bible instruction, also other subjects, all in the German language. The first of these schools was held on the Bergman farm; afterward in a room of Elder Gustav Harder's tenant house. Later two schoolhouses were erected, one toward the north and the other toward the south part of the settlement.

Since, however, a number of years

later, Kansas school laws required children to attend a minimum of six months annually in English district schools, the German day schools were discontinued. In their place shorter summer Bible schools were held in the German language. Today there are schools with all instruction in the American language known as daily vacation Bible schools. For several years a preparatory school was held for those who had completed the eighth grade in district school.

On September 29, 1905, the brethren J. P. Andres and H. M. Wiebe discontinued their ministerial duties in our church. The former joined the Zion congregation near Elbing, continuing to serve it as a minister for many years.

In the year 1908 the Emmaus Church elected Brother Henry Thiessen as minister. He was installed in 1911, after several years of teaching and further preparation, being ordained with Brother Alfred Wiebe who had prepared himself for missionary service.

In 1910 Brother Bernhard Wiebe, who had moved here from Oklahoma, was elected to serve our church as minister. Brother Wiebe died on July 22, 1921.

Elder Gustav Harder passed away on June 16, 1923, having served the congregation for 39 years as minister, 21 of these as elder.

On October 7, 1923, Brother B. W. Harder was elected as his successor. Until 1939 the brethren B. W. Harder and Henry Thiessen continued, the former as elder, the latter as minister. Both retired from service to the congregation in the same year—1939. Brother B. W. Harder had served 37 years, 16 of these as elder. Brother Thiessen had served 28 years as minister of the church.

First Full-time Pastor

With the election of Brother John C. Kaufman, who had been serving the Hopefield Church near Moundridge, Kansas, the congregation selected its first full-time pastor (minister and eld-



Johann P. Andres

Minister

1893-1905

er) from outside its membership. Brother Kaufman served from 1939 to 1947. In the fall of 1948 Brother Walter H. Dyck was elected as pastor of the church.

To the present twelve brethren have served as ministers of the church.

New Church Buildings

Twice in the history of the congregation it became necessary to provide for larger facilities. The first church building, erected in 1878, with a seating capacity of about 200, cost about \$1,000. The second, built in 1908, was to provide space for 400, and cost about \$6,000. The third, which is still serving our needs today, built in 1929, with a seating capacity of about 800, cost about \$27,000.

Singing

Until 1908 the hymnal used at our worship services was the one without notes brought over from Germany. In 1903 our Mennonite "Gesangbuch Mit Noten" was introduced. In the same year the first musical instrument, a reed organ, and later a piano (the ones we are still using) were purchased. Until 1929 four brethren had taken turns in leading the singing. At present the congregation elects a song leader annually.

The First Deacons

In 1917 the first deacons were elected. These brethren, John H. Claassen, John Epp, Sr., and John Harder, Sr., together with the ministers, constituted the church board. A church constitution was adopted in 1923.

Statistics

A summary of statistics reveals that during these 75 years a total of 492 persons have been baptised upon the confession of their faith in Jesus Christ, joining with the membership of the church; 171 have joined the congregation by letter; 127 have been called away by death; 168 church letters have been granted to those joining other congregations.

There have been 121 marriages solemnized between members of the church; and 99 marriages of one member of our church with that of another church. A total of 707 children have been born to members of the church. The present membership of the church is 391.

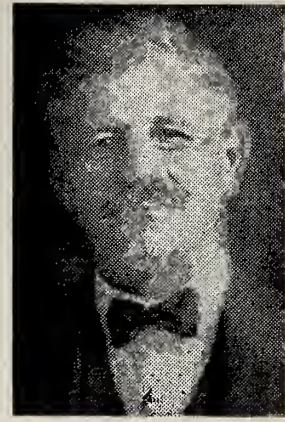
Only two of the original pioneers coming 75 years ago are still among the living. They are Brother Gustav Regier of Whitewater and Mrs. Justine Claassen Entz, now living in Texas.

Accidental Deaths

It can be noted that only three members of the church entered eternity due to tragic accidents. Brother H. C. Harder was taken through lightning; Sister Marie Penner through the tornado of 1941; and Brother Walter Thiessen through drowning. We have been spared from deaths through car, truck, and other farm implement accidents.

Missions

Although our General Conference had already begun its missionary work among the Indians in 1880, about the time the first of our forefathers came to America, the first of our members to go into missionary service were



Bernhard W. Harder

**Minister
1902-1939**

**Elder
1923-1939**

Brother and Sister Alfred Wiebe who went to work among the American Indians of Montana in 1911.

Sister Marie J. Regier was the next, going in 1926, to China. The Lester Wuthrichs followed to China in 1933. The year 1945 saw Sister Martha Thiesen and the Edward Wiebes go to the "Go Ye" Mission, the Curt Claassens go to India, Sister Paula Wiebe go to Costa Rica, Central America. Sister Dora Regier went to Ecuador, South America, in 1946, and Sister Elsie Regier Friesen to Morocco, Africa, in 1947. More recently the Ernest Wiebes have been doing work in Cuba.

"Whose Faith Follow"

We are grateful to God for His leadings and His continued blessing throughout these years. May we and our children call to remembrance the grace of Christ that has been lived before us by saintly fathers and mothers, devout ministers and missionaries, who have been laboring with us, as suggested in Hebrews 13:7-8 (R.S.V.), "Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the Word of God; consider the outcome of their life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today and forever."

"A Look into the Future"

by **H. J. Dyck**

"Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest."

The Law of God

Israel had been delivered out of the land of bondage through the mighty hand of God and his servant Moses. After their wilderness experiences God appointed a new leader, Joshua, who was to bring them into the promised land. God had provided them with the book of the law and urged upon them the observance of its statutes. Then and only then would they prosper and have good success. A straight line was marked out for them from which they should not deviate either to the right hand or to the left. (Joshua 1:6-9)

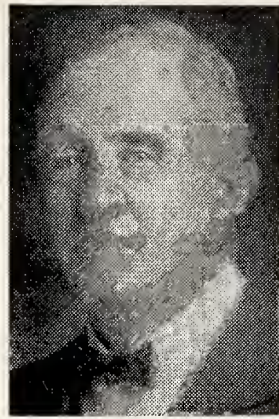
The New Commandment

Seventy-five years ago our people came to this country under God's guidance. Because of government regulations which ran counter to our Mennonite faith and practice, they were inwardly compelled to make this change. Their Magna Carta was the Sermon on the Mount and the other New Testament scriptures. The words of Jesus: "But I say unto you," decided their course of action.

As we take a look into the future, we are guided by the above scriptures. If these be neglected or discarded, there is no future for our Mennonite church as such; but our candlestick will be removed.

The purpose of this topic is to discover the trends, which may indicate the future of our Mennonite people who immigrated from Prussia seventy-five years ago.

Having visited Germany recently,



Heinrich M. Wiebe

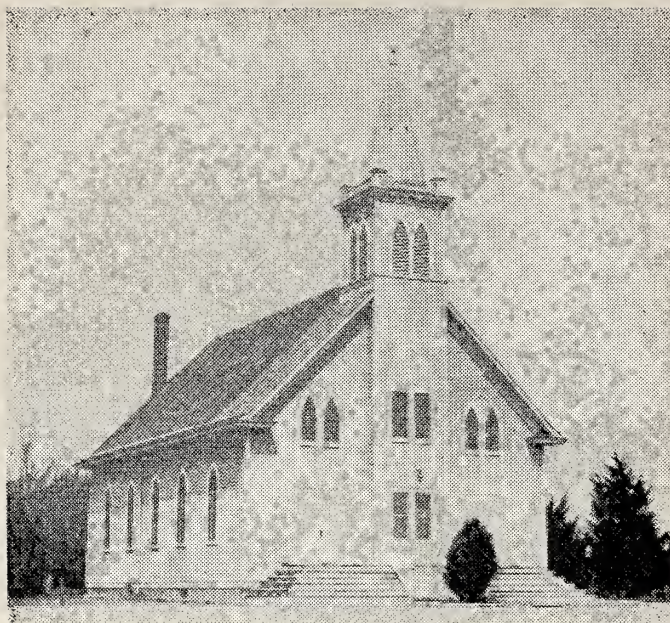
Minister

1902-1905

one understands better the reasons why our fathers left that land in search for a place where they could practice their faith. What they considered future then, has now become history. Our Mennonite heritage does not consist only of opposition to military service and war; but it is a whole way of life consistent with the scriptures.

The New Covenant

It includes, first of all, baptism upon the confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior, followed by voluntary church membership, in which one assumes personal responsibility to live a life of obedience to God and His Word. Our forefathers also believed in freedom of conscience, the separation of Church and State, the non-swearing of oaths and Biblical nonresistance. It was their aim to return to apostolic faith and practice. This position has always been challenged or attacked by those who do not make a rightful distinction between the scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments. To be sure, the entire Bible is inspired and profitable, a reliable record of God's revelation to men. In its historical perspective the Old Testament is preliminary and preparatory for the New. Its figures, types and prophecies were fulfilled in Christ and in the new and better covenant,



**The Second Church Building
erected in 1908**

which He established. The New Testament alone is authoritative for the Christian's faith and practice. Any attempt to justify the oath or military service and war can only be based upon the Old Testament.

The Outstanding Mark

Since non-resistance is perhaps the outstanding mark of difference in contrast to other denominations and the main reason for seeking religious liberty in this country, we may well observe the trend along this line. Mennonites in Germany have remarked repeatedly: "You did well in going to America." Statistics show that our Mennonite young men have not stood unitedly for this principle of the church and, because of worldly associations on the one hand and the teaching of militant fundamentalist pastors and schools on the other, have repudiated the doctrine of non-resistance.

Dr. J. W. Fretz, in a recent survey on this point, finds that in one of our large Mennonite communities a comparative study was made of the position of men of draft age in World Wars I and II.

Downward Trend

In the first World War 10 percent of the men went into the regular army;

60 per cent went into noncombatant service and 30 percent took the absolute position. In the Second World War 40 percent went into the regular army, 25 percent into noncombatant service and 29 percent into C.P.S. service.

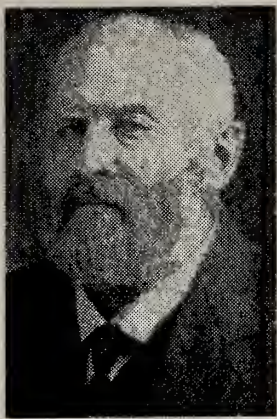
The trend, in about 30 years, is definitely toward regular army service. Our General Conference to which nearly all of our Prussian Mennonites belong, furnishes 55 percent of their young men to regular military service, while the average of all Mennonites was 40 percent. Even in noncombatant service we have a higher percentage than the average. While 46 percent of all Mennonites chose the IV-E position, our General Conference had only 27 percent.

Why should this be at a time when our government has made legal provision for conscientious objectors? Why this attitude, when other denominations are looking to us for light and guidance, and when groups of people in Germany have left the State church, realizing that it was becoming too militaristic? Mennonites of Germany and Holland, who had lost their nonresistant testimony, are again endeavoring to recapture it.

Prosperity Brings Laxity

Following the trend of the past we need no prophet to tell what the future of our denomination will be. "When the salt has lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted, it is henceforth good for nothing."

Because of their stand for what they considered the full gospel or the "all things" which Jesus commanded to teach and to observe, our forefathers were often misunderstood, persecuted and haunted or limited in the practice of their faith. During these seventy-five years in this country we have enjoyed material prosperity, which has tended to laxity in spiritual matters and in the practical application of Christ's teaching in daily life. Our spiritual progress has not kept pace



Bernhard Wiebe

Minister

1910-1921



Henry Thiessen

Minister

1911-1939

with the material. Our conscience is less sensitive to certain moral questions, such as honesty, integrity, the marriage vow, nonconformity to worldly entanglements, and others.

God's standards of right and wrong never change. The Sermon on the Mount is no less important now than when it was spoken. It takes consecrated Christians to live up to it.

An Unpopular Way

Looking into the future, let us remember, that a wholehearted Christian life cannot be lived without determination, sacrifice and suffering. The Apostle Paul tells us, that they that will live godly lives must suffer persecution. Our Christian way of life is not popular with the world. It rebukes the carnal nature of man with its heroes. Those having the mind of Christ love and overcome evil with good. It requires the determination of a Daniel, not to defile himself with the ways of the court of Babylon, although it was popular to do so. We need a revival of the Christian conscience, the illumination of the Holy Spirit to discern God's will and His power to live accordingly.

Revival Needed

The future of our people as a denomination will depend largely on a

revival of the fundamental points of our faith. We claim a wonderful heritage and tradition; but this alone will not assure our future. The German statement: "Was Du ererbt von deinen Vaetern, erwirb es um es zu besitzen," is well to be remembered. A son may inherit a very valuable set of tools from his father. He prizes them highly; but does not know how to put them to practical use. Our faith must be put into practice, else it is like a kit of tools laid away in a closet. Our Christian faith is a power, that can do wonderful things for ourselves and others. It has come down to us as a heritage from the past. That is good. If we cherish it as a precious possession, that is good. But only as we live by it, do we discover its power.

Christ in Homes

We have emphasized the Christian home. It is the basis of our church and denominational life. Intermarriage with non-Mennonite or non-Christian people has weakened our position. In establishing a home many young people vie with the world in putting on outward paraphernalia, worldly songs and luxurious fineries at their weddings. Is this our testimony to the world?

The teaching of "all things" (Matt. 28:20) should find its first application in the home. God's word is very spe-



The Third Church Building, Erected in 1929

cific about the training of children. In Deut. 6:6 we read: "These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart." Parents can not teach or train their children unless they are saturated with the Word themselves. "And thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children." See also vs. 7,8,9 and Deut. 32:46-47.

"It Is Your Life"

Children instructed by word and Christian example will appreciate the faith of their parents and try to follow their way of life.

The observance of all of God's Word is not a vain or unimportant thing, as some people have considered it. They ignore the suffering and persecution through which our forefathers have gone. God says by Moses, "It is your life." Your very existence depends upon its observance. "Ye shall prolong your days in the land." Our continued existence as a Mennonite denomination in our land, will depend upon faithfulness to the teachings of the Word of

God, and especially of the words of Jesus, who said, "But I say unto you."

Church Training

If we wish to prolong our days, this home training must be followed up by Christian education in the school. Our people who live in Mennonite communities can often help to determine who shall instruct their children. These formative years of the child's life can be given very definite direction by the attitude of Christian teachers.

Since our nation may be going into Universal Military Training, State schools will naturally emphasize the military spirit. It is therefore important that our young people, not young men only, attend our denominational schools, or schools that are in sympathy with, and positively teach church history and doctrine in line with our "full gospel" interpretation.

Must Serve Willingly

If we wish to continue to practice the faith of our fathers, we should give careful attention to the provisions of



John C. Kaufman

Pastor

1939-1947



Walter H. Dyck

Pastor

1949-

our government for those who are conscientiously opposed to military training and service. We thank God for the consideration given us in a time like this. The draft regulations now provide that our young men shall perform such civilian work contributing to the maintenance of the national health, safety or interest.

Our young men and young women who are active in Voluntary Service are giving their testimony of love and good will. May this spirit increase.

Let Our Light Shine

As Mennonites we are a minority group and cannot expect to be popular in the world. We must be ready to suffer reproach and persecution. We are not to put our light under a bushel. Jesus says, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill, cannot be hid. Let your light so shine before men."

During the last decades our Mennonite people have been scattered more widely than ever before. God wants to use our testimony throughout the world. If we appreciate this full gospel of Jesus Christ, let us make it known.

Call to Rededication

This anniversary should be to all of us a rededication to the faith of our fathers, which was based on the teachings of the Lord Jesus and his apostles. "The church hardly understands this apostolic faith. We have a slight glow of it left from our Mennonite tradition, a glow which must be kindled into a great flame if our church is to fulfill its mission."

Looking into the future, we are assured, that only as we abide by the Word of God and observe to do all that is written therein, will we make our way prosperous, and we shall have good success.

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Emmaus Mennonite Church

In Commemoration of seventy years

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AUTHOR

Emmaus Mennonite Church

TITLE In Commemoration of seventy-
five years in America, 1876-1951

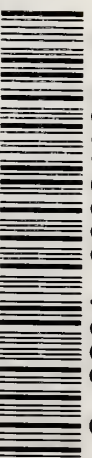
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